

upon this one ♂ *C. flavirostris* with unusually large measurements: wing 62 mm, tail 33 mm (J. Bull, pers. comm.). However, no detailed description and measurements were given by Conway (1962) and there is no additional museum material to support the validity of this new subspecies.

No justification for subdividing of *C. flavirostris* can be found in the small individual variations within the very limited known material, and the number of skins collected for which exact locality data are given is too small to prove the existence of subspecific isolated populations. Although both 'subspecies' are mentioned by Storer (*in* Peters 1970), he does not subdivide the species. The details given above, support this view.

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IN BRIEF

Alleged occurrence of *Rheinartia ocellata* in Sumatra

Dr. H. D. Rijksen conducted field work on the ecology of the orang utan *Pongo pygmaeus* in Sumatra from 1971 to 1974. His study area was in primary lowland rain forest at Ketambe, 32 km north of the township of Kutacane in Aceh Province at 3° 40' N, 97° 30' E, lying within the Gunung Leuser Reserve. While there he compiled a list of the birds and mammals present in his study area, which included the pheasant *Rheinartia ocellata* (Rijksen 1978). This species has not been recorded from Sumatra before.

In correspondence Dr. Rijksen wrote that he had "not found any hard evidence of the occurrence [of *R. ocellata*] but once glimpsed an animal which strongly resembled some plates in books depicting this species". He heard calls from this bird which were higher pitched than those of *Argusianus argus* but otherwise similar.

Males of the 2 pheasants *A. argus* and *R. ocellata* make dancing grounds, large cleared spaces used for display, from which they call loudly and repeatedly. The similarity of their calls has been emphasized, for instance by Robinson & Chasen (1936); but detailed descriptions of the calls of *R. ocellata*, which are actually quite distinctive, have only been published since Rijkse's field work (Wells 1975, Davison 1978).

I visited Ketambe from 18 to 21 August 1978, when male *A. argus* were calling continually. In this period I covered the entire 1.5 km² area used by Rijkse (at an altitude from 350 to 500 m) as well as a further large area to the south extending to 1020 m altitude. Four dancing grounds between 350 and 500 m—the total in use within Rijkse's area—and a fifth at 600 m were examined. Feathers were found on each which belonged to male *A. argus*, and all the calls heard from the dancing grounds were of that species. Birds at a further 8 distant dancing grounds, on both sides of the Alas valley, were identified from calls alone as *A. argus*. None of the distinctive calls of *R. ocellata* were heard.

It would seem that Rijkse's bird was misidentified due to the inadequacy of published descriptions of the calls of *R. ocellata*, and this species should therefore not be added to the Sumatran list.

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Two overlooked vagrants from the Tristan da Cunha group

The most recent list of the birds of the Tristan da Cunha group is that of Elliott (1957). He does not mention either the Ringed Plover *Charadrius hiaticula* of the Holarctic or the Dark-billed Cuckoo *Coccyzus melacoryphus* of the Neotropical as vagrants collected there. *C. melacoryphus* is mentioned without comment by Winterbottom (1976) in his report on the Keytel collection. Peringuey (1910: 5), who was Director of the South African Museum, Cape Town, adverts to the Keytel collection and states "there was also procured a South American Cuckoo, that had found its way to Nightingale Island". Peringuey (1924: 8) describes an exhibit of Tristan birds that he had caused to be displayed. He notes with pleasure that the museum has two species not recorded by Wilkins (1923) "1, a South American Cuckoo (*Coccyzus melancoryphus*) and 2, the Ringed Plover (*Aegialitis hyaticola*), accidental importations no doubt".

The 1924 reference to a cuckoo should be read with the 1910 reference, i.e. Keytel obtained a *Coccyzus melancoryphus* on Nightingale Island during his period in the group, which Peringuey (1910) and Winterbottom (1976) give as 1907–1909. This is not the first record of vagrancy by *C. melancoryphus*: it